

**THE EFFECT OF USING STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING  
GRAMMAR FOR EFL CLASSROOM  
(An Experiment study at STKIP BinaBangsaGetsempena Banda Aceh)**

**Siti Fachraini<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract**

This study is intended to find out the effect of using storytelling to increase students' ability in mastering grammatical structure focused on past tense subject and to investigate if there any significance differences in students' score between students taught by using storytelling technique and traditional method. Research method used in this study was experimental study in which the participants were students of STKIP BinaBangsaGetsempena Banda Aceh. They were EFL students who studied at Pendidikan Guru SekolahDasar (PGSD) department. The students were 50 students divided into two groups (experimental class and control class). The instrument used was tests (pre-test and post-test) which were given before and after treatment. Experimental group was taught by using storytelling technique otherwise control group was taught by using traditional method. The result of the study shows that  $t_{\text{obtain}} > t_{\text{table}}$  that is  $5.139 > 2.00$ , so  $H_0$  is rejected. In other words, the students who were taught using storytelling technique achieved a better ability in mastering grammatical structure than the students who were taught grammar by using traditional method. It indicates that there is a significant differences in the experimental group compared to the control group. Thus, it can be concluded that storytelling technique is effective in increasing students' ability in mastering grammar.

**Keywords:** *storytelling technique, teaching grammar, EFL students*

---

<sup>1</sup>SitiFachraini, Dosen STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena. Email: siti.fachraini@yahoo.com

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

In this modern era, students in all degrees are demanded to master English for better communication around the world. It becomes the challenge for teachers and lecturers to increase student's ability in learning English. With the development of communicative approach and many more methods in teaching English, the teachers and the lecturers do not pay attention to teach grammar any more. Their teaching focus was to make students capable in using the language and able to conveying what they want to say spontaneously.

In addition, some theorists believed that teaching grammar to language learner did not help them to master the language. In their opinion, the aim of English Language Teaching is to make the student able to communicate in target language. Thus, the student was merely taught communication skills such as introduction, apologizing, requesting, and so forth. The important thing is what they say can be understood by native speakers without need to learn grammar.

In the contrary, it cannot be denied that all the language functions consist of grammatical elements. Without grammar, the message conveying was understandable and inaccurate for listeners. So, the students do really need to learn grammar in order to capable in performing language functions appropriately. That is the reason why grammar is important to be taught because through grammar student can produce sentence in foreign language correctly.

For some students, learning grammar is a bored activity in classroom especially for students who learn English as foreign language. They have to remember the rules and do some practices. Moreover, they must differentiate one structure to other structure correctly. So, their interest in learning English becomes decrease rapidly because of this fact. EFL students want to master English as soon as possible and as practice as possible. They do not want to waste their time to remember the rules of grammar. Therefore, the lecturer needs to find out some interesting and enjoyable techniques in teaching grammar in order that students can learn grammar comfortably. Because of this reason, the researcher wants to teach grammar by using storytelling technique in order to increase EFL students' ability in mastering English without feeling bored.

Storytelling seems to be one of the most popular techniques and contains cultural value that can be easily used in language classroom. The technique was functioned to develop students' ability in listening, speaking, reading and writing. It also can be used to teach a variety of language items such as sentence pattern, vocabulary and pronunciation. Pesola (1991) describes storytelling in foreign language classroom as "one of the most powerful tools for surrounding the young learner with language" (p. 340).

When teacher uses storytelling in the classroom, the students not only practice and develop listening and reading skills but they also learn new vocabulary and grammatical

structures. The important point is the repetition of words and form of grammatical structure used by the students while performing the story make them mastering the vocabulary and grammatical structure spontaneously.

Based on the explanation above, in this research the writer wanted to apply storytelling technique in teaching English to the students of Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD) at STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena. They were EFL students in which their native language was Bahasa Indonesia. The English subject that they learned was compulsory subject in fifth semester. In this study, the students were taught grammatical structure by using storytelling technique focused in past tenses materials.

#### Research questions

1. Is storytelling technique effective to increase students' ability in grammar?
2. Is there any significant different in students' achievement score between the students taught by using storytelling technique and students who taught traditional method?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Storytelling consists of more than just telling stories. It may include not only creating a story but also using of pictures, acting, singing, story writing and so forth. Furthermore, storytelling is a teaching technique in conveying events that happened in the world, ideas, and moral values. Storytelling was the only tool available to people to preserve and share cultural customs, beliefs and heritage. Story proved to be the oldest and the most substantiated means

for humans to remember and store information (Abrahamson, 1998).

Moreover, Barzaq (2009, p. 7) defines storytelling as a knowledge management technique, a way of distributing information, targeted to audiences and a sense of information, she added that stories provide natural connection between events and concepts and finally, she added that visual storytelling is a way of telling stories through images.

Baldwin (1995) in his article, "The Lost Art of Storytelling to raise happy children, tell them tales", writes that "Stories are perhaps the most effective teaching tool ever used. All of the great worlds' religions use tales and parables to preserve and transmit beliefs and values" (p. 3). Oral storytelling allows students to strengthen their communication skills; thus providing them the tools with which they may successfully negotiate through life's daily interactions.

Barzaq (2009, p. 5) stated that storytelling plays an important role in teaching; thus more learners remember what they learner easily when it is explained in a narrative way and she specified some benefits of storytelling technique as follows:

1. It sparks students' imagination and interest in the language skills
2. It builds vocabulary, comprehension, story sequencing
3. It improves listening and oral communication skills

She also added that storytelling offers teachers a chance to explore into their students' background experience. She also mentioned

some benefits of the storytelling technique; firstly, the learners may gain verbal skills' that can improve the ability to resolve interpersonal discussion and many other skills. Secondly, it provokes the imagination by either telling or listening that may help the learners to think about new ideas and build self-confidence. Finally, it may help the learners to learn from others' experiences and other's wisdom in behaving in such situation.

Besides, Barzaq (2009, p. 15) considered storytelling as educational means because they are believable, memorable, and entertaining and because they depend on humans and their experience that is considered as an authentic and credible source of knowledge.

In conclusion, McDrury and Alterio (2003) stated that if educators and students practice reflective learning through storytelling, the end result will be learning that is more meaningful, challenging and stimulating. In addition, reflective learning through storytelling offers the additional benefit of creating transformative self-knowledge and personal growth. By sharing stories and listening to others, students process information on a deeper and more meaningful level thus constructing new knowledge and practices.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **1. Research Design**

This research was experimental study. It concerns primarily with discovering the effectiveness between or among interrelationship of two variables at the same time of actions did. In experiment design there

were two groups, the experimental and the control group. The procedure of experiment design included pre-test, treatment and post-test.

Moreover, this study tried to find out if there has any difference in students' score in mastering English structure between experiment class which was taught using storytelling technique and control class which was taught by using traditional method. In addition, in this study, the researcher intended to find out which of the techniques were effective in increasing the students' ability in mastering past tenses. Besides, to collect the data, the writer gave two tests (pre and post-test) for both of the groups in order to know the students' scores.

### **2. Subject**

The participants in this study were 50 college students of STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena Banda Aceh. They were third year students who have been studying in Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD) department. The sample includes female and male students with the same native language. They learn English as compulsory subject in the fifth semester. Then, the researcher divided them into two groups randomly (one experimental and one control group) involved in the study (25 students each group)

### **3. Instrument**

Instrument used in this study were tests. The tests were administered twice, pre-test and post-test. The lecturer wanted the students to answer the questions that were at the end of passage. A story containing some grammatical points related to past tense. The

tests consisted of five texts and the answers are in form of multiple choices items consisted of five questions for each text. The pre-test and post-test were different in form of the texts and questions but were similar in degree of difficulties. The maximum score was 100 that derived from 20 questions times 5 for one right answer. The individual students' score was derived from students' total score divided by the maximum score 20, and then multiply with 100% as the constant score. The pre-test was used to find out the students' grammar score before the treatment and post- test was used to find out the students' grammar score after the treatment.

#### **4. Procedures**

First of all, the students were divided into two groups – experimental and control groups- in each group consisted of 25 students. Then in the different place, the researcher gave a pre-test to both groups in order to evaluate the students' ability in grammar. She asked students to answer the questions that have been provided. The researcher develop 20 items multiple choice test on past tenses. Test items had 5 choices and only one of which was correct. In scoring technique, the students got (1) point for each correct answer and (0) for each wrong answer was allotted.

Then, the researcher gave treatment for each class. Experimental class was taught by using storytelling technique and control class was taught by using traditional method. In teaching the experimental group, the lecturer chose one short story to be read together in the class. Having read the story, the lecturer asked if the students found any

difficult words and guided them to find the meaning of the words by using context clues in sentences. After that, the lecturer asked the students to analyze the sentences structure in the story whether those sentences were different than the sentences learnt in the last meeting (present tense) or not. Then, some students were asked to retell the story in front of the class by using their own words. For the last activity, the students had to answer some questions below the passage in order to evaluate the students' ability in grammar.

In control group class, the researcher used traditional method in teaching grammar. First, the lecturer read a short story and the students repeated it loudly. Then she translated the story into Bahasa Indonesia word per word. After that the lecturer taught formula and examples of past tenses. At the end of class, the students were asked to answer the questions related to past tenses that have been learnt before.

After giving treatment for experimental group and control group, the researcher distributed the post-test in order to evaluate the result of learning grammar for both groups.

#### **RESULT FINDING**

The purpose of this study is to find out the effect of using storytelling technique to teach grammar for EFL learners and to investigate if there is significant difference in students' achievement between storytelling technique and traditional method of grammar teaching. The data were collected through a pretest, treatment and posttest designed for

equivalent groups and the data were analyzed by using SPSS.

- a. The Independent t-test Analysis on the Pre-test for the Experimental and the Control Group

Since the distribution of post-test is normal and the data are homogenous, the independent sample t-test can be utilized to compare the pretest of experimental and control groups. The result of the t-test is shown in the following table

Table 1: the independent t-test for revealing the differences between two groups on pre-test

Group Statistics					
Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Value Experiment al	25	50.2000	10.84743	2.16949	
Control	25	47.0000	9.01388	1.80278	

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
nilai	Equal variances assumed	2.380	.129	1.134	48	.262	3.20000	2.82076	-2.47151	8.87151
	Equal variances not assumed			1.134	46.443	.262	3.20000	2.82076	-2.47643	8.87643

The table above illustrates that  $t_{\text{obtain}}$  of both pre-test of experimental and control group is 1.134. The  $t_{\text{table}}$  for  $df=48$  at the level of significance 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) is 2.00. The result indicates that  $t_{\text{obtain}} < t_{\text{table}}$  that is  $1.134 < 2.00$ , so  $H_0$  is accepted. In other words, the students who were taught grammar by using storytelling technique achieved a similar performance with the students who were taught grammar through traditional method. It means that there is no significance difference

in grammar achievement between the students in the experimental and control groups.

- b. The Independent t-test Analysis on the Post-test for the Experimental and the Control Group

Since the distribution of post-test is normal and the data are homogenous, the independent sample t-test can be utilized to compare the post-test of experimental and control groups. The result of the t-test is shown in the following table.

Table 2: The Independent t-test Analysis on the Post-test for the Experimental and the Control Group

Group Statistics					
Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Value	experimental	25	68.0000	9.89529	1.97906
	Control	25	56.2000	5.82380	1.16476

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Value	Equal variances assumed	6.365	.015	5.139	48	.000	11.80000	2.29637	7.18283	16.41717
	Equal variances not assumed			5.139	38.845	.000	11.80000	2.29637	7.15455	16.44545

The table above confirms that  $t_{\text{obtain}}$  of both post-test of experimental and control group is 5.139. The  $t_{\text{table}}$  for  $df=48$  at the level of significance 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) is 2.00. The result shows that  $t_{\text{obtain}} > t_{\text{table}}$  that is  $5.139 > 2.00$ , so  $H_0$  is rejected. In other words, the students who were taught using storytelling technique achieved a better ability in mastering grammatical structure than the students who were taught grammar by using traditional method. It means that there is significance difference in reading achievement between the students in the experimental than those in the control groups.

#### c. Dependent t-test (Paired t-test Analysis)

A paired test is conducted to calculate the differences of the students' achievement both in experimental and control group before and after giving the treatment. Its objective is to compare the result of dependent-test in experimental group and in the control group. The dependent t-test is obtained by pairing the result of pre-test and post-test score in each class. The data was calculated by using SPSS procedure which can be seen in the following table.

Table 3: Statistical Summary of t-test Result on the Pre-test and Post-test of the Control Groups.

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Posttest	56.20	25	5.824	1.165
	Pretest	47.00	25	9.014	1.803

**Paired Samples Correlations**

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 posttest & pretest	25	.726	.000

**Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	posttest – pretest	9.200	6.238	1.248	6.625	11.775	7.374	24	.000

Table 4: Statistical Summary of t-test Result on the Pre-Test and Post-Test of experimental Groups.

**Paired Samples Statistics**

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Posttest	68.00	25	9.895	1.979
Pretest	50.20	25	10.847	2.169

**Paired Samples Correlations**

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Posttest-pretest	25	.906	.000

**Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	posttest – pretest	17.800	4.583	.917	15.908	19.692	19.421	24	.000

Based on the data from the table above, it can be indicated that the t-test of the experimental group is 19.421 and the t-test of control group is 7.374. The  $t_{table}$  for  $df=24$  at the level of significance 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) is 2.04. The result shows that  $t_{obtain} > t_{table}$  for both of the groups are  $19.421 > 2.04$  for the experimental group and  $7.374 > 2.04$  for the control group. It means that both of the groups achieved significant difference in speaking achievement before and after the treatment.

However, the result of t-test in experimental group is larger than the t-test in the control group ( $19.421 > 7.374$ ). It indicates that there is a significant differences in the experimental group compared to the control group. The group taught using storytelling technique achieved more improvement in score than the control group which was taught using traditional method as a usual technique used by the teacher in teaching grammar.



## Discussion

Based on research findings, the discussion of this study can be presented as below: After accumulating and processing the statistical data using SPSS, it was discovered that the distribution of the experimental and control groups' score on the pre-test was normal and the variance value of the two groups was also homogeneous. The data obtained from the pre-test score signified that the students both in experimental and control groups had quite similar ability in grammatical language. It was proven by the value of independent t-test that  $t_{\text{obtain}} < t_{\text{table}}$  that is  $1.134 < 2.00$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted in which both experimental and control groups in the pre-test have a similar performance. In other words, there is no significant difference between the experimental and control classes.

However, after the treatment given, the students who were taught by using storytelling technique achieved better scores than those taught using traditional method. It was proved by the result of the dependent t-test of each group, experimental and control groups, by pairing the pre-test and post-test that the result of t-test in experimental group is higher than the t-test in the control group ( $19.421 > 7.374$ ). It indicates that there is the significant improvement in post-test of the experimental group after storytelling technique was introduced. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It can be stated that storytelling technique is effective in teaching grammar

because it can increase the students' ability in mastering grammar.

## CONCLUSSIONS AND SUGUSSTIONS

### 1. Conclusion

Based on calculation data in the previous chapter, it can be explained that the t-test of experiment group was higher than t-test on the control group. Although in the paired t-test for pre-test in both group showed the similarity of ability in mastering grammar, but in the paired t-test for post test showed that the ability of students in experiment group increased significantly ( $19.421 > 7.374$ ). It can be stated that storytelling technique is more effective in teaching grammar because it can increase the students' scores than teaching by using conventional method such as grammar translation method. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. In other words, there was significant different between experiment group and control group in term of students' ability and achievement.

### 2. Suggestions

There are some suggestions given related to this study:

- a. The participants in this study were EFL learners. Some others studies can be conducted with elementary, junior high school, senior high school or ESL students to find or not the same result will be obtained
- b. The focus of teaching in this study was grammar. Other studies can be carried on in basic skills
- c. The material used in this study was short story that was suitable for EFL learners.

In other studies, the researchers can use some complicated and longer passage to

see if the groups will response in the same way or differently.

## REFERENCES

- Abrahamson, C. E. (1998). Abrahamson, C. (1998). *Storytelling as a Pedagogical Tool in Higher Education*. *Education*. 11 8 (3), 440-451
- Baldwin, B., (1995). *The Lost Art of Storytelling: to raise happy children*, Batter Homes and Garden
- Barzaq .M., ( 2009) *Integrating Sequential Thinking Thought Teaching Stories in the Curriculum* .Action Research.A1 .Qattan Center for Educational Research andDevelopment QCERD . Gaza
- McDrury, J., &Alterio, M. (2003).*Learning through storytelling in higher education: Using reflection and experience to improve learning*. London, LK; Sterlinga
- Pesola, C. A. (1991). Culture in the elementary foreign language classroom.*Foreign Language Annals* 24, 331-346